IN THE CLAIMS:

1   1.   (Cancelled).

1   2.   (Currently Amended)   A mail piece tracking system including:

2   A.   one or more servers that perform the operations of:

3   i.   acquiring information from one or more mail piece sources, postal

4   services or delivery companies, and creating a digital shadow for

5   each mail piece containing ~~receiving~~ delivery status information

6   ~~from one or more mail piece delivery companies~~ and linking the

7   mail piece delivery status information with respective user

8   identifiers, thereby informing the user of an incoming mail piece;

9   ii.   receiving one or more messages from the senders of the respective

10   mail pieces and linking to the delivery status information an

11   attachment consisting of the one or more messages from the senders

12   of the mail pieces;

13   iii.   producing on a user's personal web page listings of the delivery

14   status information for the mail pieces directed to respective users

15   that are associated with the user identifiers; and

16   iv.   including links to the respective messages in the listings of the

17   delivery status information allowing the user to perform at least one

18   of: sending or receiving a message, receiving or paying a bill, and

19   verifying information based upon a digital signature; and

20   B.   one or more browsers or client executables through which the respective

21   users associated with the user identifiers access the delivery status

22   information and the links to the respective messages.

1   3.   (Withdrawn) A mail piece tracking system including:

2   A.   one or more servers for linking mail piece delivery status information with

3   user identifiers,   associating with the delivery status information for a

4   given mail piece related transaction information, producing listings of the

5   delivery status information for mail pieces directed to the respective users,

6   and including a link to the transaction information in the listing of the

7   delivery status information;

8   B.   one or more browsers or client executables through which the respective

9   users associated with the user identifiers access the delivery status

10   information.

1   4.   (Currently Amended) A mail piece tracking system including:

2   A.   one or more servers that perform the operations of:

3   i.   <u>acquiring information from one or more mail piece sources, postal</u>

4   <u>services and delivery companies and creating a digital shadow for</u>

5   <u>each mail piece containing</u> ~~receiving~~ delivery status information

6   ~~from one or more mail piece delivery companies~~ and linking the

7   mail piece delivery status information with respective user

8   identifiers<u>, thereby informing the user of an incoming package</u>;

9   ii.   receiving information relating to the contents of the respective mail

10   pieces from the senders of the mail pieces and displaying said

11   information on a user's personal web page and linking to the

12   delivery status information an attachment consisting of the

13   information relating to the contents of the respective mail pieces;

14   iii.   producing on said user's personal web page respective listings of

15   the delivery status information for mail pieces directed to respective

16   users that are associated with the user identifiers; and

17   iv.   associating the information relating to the contents of the respective

18   mail pieces with the mail piece delivery status information in the

19   listings; and

20   B.   one or more browsers or client executables through which the respective
21   users associated with the user identifiers access the delivery status
22   information and the information relating to the contents of the respective
23   mail pieces.

1   5. – 6.   (Cancelled).

1   7.   (Withdrawn) A mail piece tracking system including:
2   A.   one or more servers for linking mail piece delivery status information with
3   user identifiers producing listings of the delivery status information for
4   mail pieces directed to the respective users, and including in the mail piece
5   delivery status information:
6   i.   a sender identifier,
7   ii.   a mail type identifier,
8   iii.   a delivery service identifier, and
9   iv.   links to on-line information provided by or associated with the
10   sender.

1   8.   (Cancelled)

1   9.   (Withdrawn) The method of tracking and tracing mail pieces of claim 10 wherein
2   A.   the step of linking mail piece delivery status information to the user
3   identifiers includes updating the information, and
4   B.   the step of providing a listing of mail piece delivery status information
5   includes providing in the list the updated information.

1   10.   (Withdrawn) A method for tracking and tracing mail pieces including the steps
2   of:
3   A.   associating respective users with user identifiers;

4   B.   associating with the identified users mail pieces directed to or sent by the

5   respective users;

6   C.   linking mail piece delivery status information relating to the respective

7   mail pieces to the respective user identifiers, the delivery status

8   information including information that identifies the senders of the

9   respective mail pieces that are directed to the identified users; and

10   D.   providing to a given user a listing of the respective mail pieces and the

11   mail piece delivery status information that is linked to the user identifier

12   that corresponds to the given user.

1 11.   (Withdrawn) The method of tracking and tracing mail pieces of claim 10 wherein

2 the step of linking mail piece delivery status information with the user identifiers includes

3 associating therewith messages from the respective senders.

1 12.   (Cancelled).

1 13.   (Withdrawn) The method of tracking and tracing mail pieces of claim 11 wherein

2 the step of linking mail piece delivery status information to the user identifiers includes

3 associating therewith messages from the respective delivery services.

1 14.-19. (Cancelled).

1 20.   (Withdrawn) A method for tracking and tracing mail pieces including the steps of:

2   A.   associating respective users with user identifiers;

3   B.   associating with the identified users respective mail pieces directed to or

4   sent by the respective users;

5   C.   linking mail piece delivery status information relating to the respective

6   mail pieces to the respective user identifiers, the mail piece delivery status

7   information including the source of a given mail piece; and

8   D. providing to a given user a listing of the respective mail pieces associated

9   with the given user and the mail piece delivery status information that is

10   linked to the user identifier that is associated with the given user and

11   further providing a graphical interface connected to notify the given user

12   of the delivery status of the respective mail pieces, the interface being

13   configured to display information concerning the source of a given mail

14   piece.

1 21. (Currently Amended) ~~A method for tracking and tracing mail pieces embodied~~

2 ~~in a computer readable medium including~~ Computer executable instructions embodied in

3 a computer readable medium, the instructions causing the computer to perform the steps

4 of:

5   A. associating respective users with user identifiers;

6   B. acquiring information from one or more mail piece sources, postal service

7   and delivery companies, and creating a digital shadow for each mail piece

8   containing mail piece delivery status information;

9   C~~B~~. associating with the respective users mail pieces directed to or sent by the

10   respective users and informing the user of an incoming mail piece;

11   D~~C~~. receiving mail piece delivery status information ~~displayed on a personal~~

12   ~~web page~~ from one or more mail piece delivery companies and linking the

13   mail piece delivery status information relating to the respective mail

14   pieces to the respective user identifiers that are associated with the users to

15   which the mail pieces are associated;

16   E~~D~~. receiving information ~~displayed on the personal web page~~ concerning

17   the contents of the respective mail pieces from the senders of the

18   respective mail pieces and displaying said information an a user's personal

19   web page and linking to the delivery status information an attachment

20   consisting of the information concerning the contents of the respective

21   mail pieces; and

22   F~E~.   providing on said personal web page a graphical interface ~~connected~~

23   adapted to notify the respective users of the delivery status of the

24   respective mail pieces, the interface being configured to:

25   i.   provide the mail piece delivery status information that is linked to

26   the user identifiers that are associated with the respective users, and

27   ii.   provide to the respective users the information concerning the

28   contents of the respective mail pieces.

1   22.   (Currently Amended) ~~A method for tracking and tracing mail pieces embodied in~~

2   ~~a computer readable medium including~~ Computer executable instructions embodied in a

3   computer readable medium, the instructions causing the computer to perform the steps of:

4   A.   associating respective users with respective user identifiers;

5   B.   acquiring information from one or more mail piece sources, postal

6   services and delivery companies, and creating a digital shadow for each

7   mail piece containing mail piece delivery status information;

8   C~B~.   associating with the respective users respective mail pieces directed to or

9   sent by the respective users and informing the user of an incoming mail

10   piece;

11   D~C~.   receiving mail piece delivery status information from one or more mail

12   piece delivery companies and displaying said information on a user's

13   personal web site and linking the mail piece delivery status information

14   relating to the respective mail pieces to the respective user identifiers that

15   are associated with the users to which the mail pieces are associated;

16   E~D~.   receiving ~~on said user's personal web page~~ images of at least a portion of

17   the contents of the respective mail pieces from the respective senders and

18   displaying said images on said user's personal web page and linking to the

19   delivery status information an attachment consisting of the images of at

20   least a portion of the contents of the respective mail pieces; and

21 FE. providing to respective users listings of the respective mail pieces and the

22   mail piece delivery status information that are linked to the user identifiers

23   that correspond to the respective users; and

24 GF. providing on said personal web page a graphical interface connected to:

25   i. notify the respective users of the delivery status of the associated

26   respective mail pieces; and

27   ii. provide to the users the images of at least a portion of the contents

28   of the respective mail pieces.

1 23. (Currently Amended) ~~A method for tracking and tracing mail pieces embodied in~~

2 ~~a computer readable medium including~~ Computer executable instructions embodied in a

3 computer readable medium, the instructions causing the computer to perform the steps of:

4 A. associating respective users with respective user identifiers;

5 B. acquiring information from one or more mail piece sources, postal

6   services and delivery companies, and creating a digital shadow for each

7   mail piece containing mail piece delivery status information;

8 CB. associating with the users respective mail pieces directed to or sent by the

9   respective users and informing the user of an incoming mail piece;

10 DC. receiving mail piece delivery status information from respective mail

11   piece delivery companies and linking the mail piece delivery status

12   information relating to the respective mail pieces to the respective user

13   identifiers;

14 ED. receiving images of information associated with respective mail pieces

15   from respective senders and linking to the delivery status information an

16   attachment consisting of the images of information associated with

17   respective mail pieces;

18 FE. providing to respective users listings of the respective mail pieces and the

19   mail piece delivery status information that are linked to the user identifiers

20   that correspond to the respective users; and

21 F.G.– providing a graphical interface connected to:

22   i.   notify the respective users of the delivery status of the associated

23   respective mail pieces;

24   ii.   provide to the users the images of information associated with the

25   respective mail pieces; and

26   iii   provide links for the user to senders and sellers allowing the user to

27   perform at least one of: sending or receiving a message, receiving or

28   paying a bill, and verifying information based upon a digital

29   signature.

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24.   (Previously Presented) The ~~method of tracking and tracing mail pieces~~ computer executable instructions of claim 23 in which one or more messages from the senders or the mail delivery companies are received and the interface is further configured to provide the one or more messages associated with the respective mail pieces.

25.   (Withdrawn) A method for tracking and tracing mail pieces including the steps of:

      A.   associating respective users with respective user identifiers;

      B.   associating with the identified users respective mail pieces directed to or sent by the respective users;

      C.   linking mail piece delivery status information relating to the associated respective mail pieces to the respective user identifiers, the mail piece delivery status information including one or more links to information provided by senders of the respective mail pieces; and

      D.   providing to a given user a listing of the associated respective mail pieces and the mail piece delivery status information that is linked to the user identifier that corresponds to the given user and providing a graphical interface connected to notify the given user of the delivery status of the associated respective mail pieces, the interface being configured to provide one or more links to the information provided by a sender of a given mail piece.

26.   (Withdrawn) The method of tracking and tracing mail pieces of claim 25 wherein the information provided by the sender includes one or more of transaction history, account balance, and payment option information.

27.   (Cancelled).

28.   (Currently Amended) Computer-readable memory comprising computer program instructions for use in providing mail piece tracking and tracing, the instructions when executed causing:

    A.   one or more servers to:

        i.   <u>acquire information from one or more mail piece sources, postal services and delivery companies, and creating a digital shadow for each mail piece containing</u> ~~receive~~ mail piece delivery status information ~~from respective mail delivery companies~~ and link the mail piece delivery status information with <u>respective</u> user identifiers <u>to thereby inform the user of an incoming mail piece</u>;

        ii.   receive messages from the senders of the respective mail pieces and link to the delivery status information an attachment consisting of the messages from the senders of the respective mail pieces,

        iii.   produce for a user, a personal web page including listings of the delivery status information for mail pieces directed to the respective users that correspond to the user identifiers; and

        iv.   provide in said user's personal web page links to the messages in the listings of the delivery status information; and

    B.   one or more browsers to provide to the respective users associated with the user identifiers access to the listings of the delivery status information and the linked messages.

29.   (Currently Amended) Computer-readable memory comprising computer program instructions for use in providing mail piece tracking and tracing, the instructions when executed causing:

     A.   one or more servers to:

          i.   <u>acquire information from one or more mail piece sources, postal services and delivery companies and creating a digital shadow for each mail piece containing</u> ~~receive~~ mail piece delivery status information ~~from respective mail delivery companies~~ and link the mail piece delivery status information with <u>respective</u> user identifiers <u>to thereby inform the user of an incoming mail piece</u>;

          ii.   receive sender transaction information from respective senders of the mail pieces and link the sender transaction information to the delivery status information;

          iii.   produce on a user's personal web page listings of the delivery status information for mail pieces directed to the respective users that correspond to the user identifiers; and

          iv.   associate the links to the transaction information with the listings of the delivery status information on said user's personal web page allowing the user to perform at least one of: sending or receiving a message, receiving or paying a bill, and verifying information based upon a digital signature~~.~~

          ~~-~~; and

     B.   one or more browsers to provide access to the delivery status information linked to a given user identifier and also to links to the transaction information that associated with the delivery status information.

30.   (Currently Amended) Computer-readable memory comprising computer program instructions for use in providing mail piece tracking and tracing, the instructions when executed causing:

     A.   one or more servers to:

i.   <u>acquire information from one or more mail piece sources and</u>
   <u>delivery companies and create a digital shadow for each mail piece</u>
   <u>containing</u> ~~receive~~ mail piece delivery status information from
   respective mail delivery companies and link mail piece delivery
   status information with <u>respective</u> user identifiers<u> to thereby</u>
   <u>inform the user of an incoming mail piece</u>;

ii.   receive information relating to the contents of the respective mail
   pieces from the respective senders and link to the delivery status
   information an attachment consisting of the information relating to
   the contents of the respective mail pieces;

iii.   produce listings of the mail piece delivery status information for
   mail pieces directed to the respective users that correspond to the
   user identifiers; and

iv.   include in the listings the information relating to the contents of the
   respective mail pieces; and

B.   one or more browsers to provide access to the delivery status information
   linked to a given user identifier and further to provide access to the
   associated information relating to the contents of the mail pieces.

31.   (Cancelled).

32.   (Withdrawn) Computer-readable memory comprising computer program
instructions for use in providing mail piece tracking and tracing, the instructions when
executed causing:

A.   one or more servers to
   link mail piece delivery status information with user identifiers, the
   delivery status information for a given mail piece including

   i.   a sender identifier,

   ii.   a mail type identifier,

   iii.   a delivery service identifier, and

10   iv.   related messages from the sender and the delivery service, and

11   v.   produce listings of the delivery status information for mail pieces

12   directed to the respective users that correspond to the user

13   identifiers; and

14   B.   one or more browsers to provide access to the delivery status information

15   linked to a given user identifier

1   33.   (Cancelled).

1   34   (Withdrawn) A method of operating a computer system, the method including the

2   steps of:

3   A. associating a given user session with a user identifier;

4   B. retaining messages relating to the status of the session at a server and

5   including in each message a message sequence number and an attribute that is

6   associated with the user identifier; and

7   C. using the messages to continue the session from a point at which the session

8   last communicated with the server, in response to the user identifier being

9   presented at a node that communicates with the server.

1   35.   (Withdrawn) The method of claim 34 further including a step of maintaining an

2   index of the messages, the index being sorted by the attribute that is associated with the

3   user identifier.

1   36.   (Withdrawn) The method of claim 35 further including:

2   A.   a step of communicating through the session and providing information

3   relating to a mailing label;

4   B.   in the step of retaining messages retaining messages that include the

5   information relating to the mailing label;

6   C.   in the step of continuing the session presenting the retained information

7   relating to the mailing label; and

8   D.   a step of ending the session by printing the mailing label in accordance

9   with the retained information.

1   37.   (Withdrawn) The method of claim 36 further including:

2   A.   in the step of communicating through the session providing information

3   relating to postage for a mail piece;

4   B.   in the step of retaining messages retaining messages that include the

5   information relating to the postage;

6   C.   in the step of continuing the session presenting the retained information

7   relating to the postage; and

8   D.   in the step of ending the session printing the postage in accordance with the

9   retained information.

1   38.   (Withdrawn) The method of claim 35 further including:

2   A.   a step of communicating through the session and providing information

3   relating to postage for a mail piece;

4   B.   in the step of retaining messages retaining messages that include the

5   information relating to the postage;

6   C.   in the step of continuing the session presenting the retained information

7   relating to the postage; and

8   D.   a step of ending the session by printing the postage in accordance with the

9   retained information.

1   39.   (Withdrawn)   A method of operating a computer network including the steps of:

2   A.   associating a user session with a user identifier that is presented to gain

3   access to information maintained by the network from a first node that

4   communicates with the network;

5   B.   retaining a queue of messages relating to the user session and associating

6   the queue with the user identifier; and

7   C.   in response to the user identifier being later presented at the first node or a

8   second node that communicates over the network, continuing the user

9   session at the first or second node by using the messages to present the

10   session at the point at which the session last communicated with the

11   server.

1   40.   (Withdrawn)   The method of claim 36 wherein the step of retaining a queue of

2   messages includes indexing the messages by the user identifier.

1   41.   (Withdrawn)   The method of claim 37 wherein the step of retaining a queue of

2   messages further includes maintaining the queue at each of a plurality of interconnected

3   nodes, a given one of the interconnected nodes at which the user identifier is provided

4   presenting the user session at the point at which the session last communicated with the

5   server.

1   42.   (Withdrawn) The method of claim 38 further including conducting the user

2   session by communicating over the network using a browser or a client executable.

1   43.   (Withdrawn)   The method of claim 37 wherein the step of presenting the user

2   identifier includes providing a machine-readable code to a scanner that communicates

3   with the node.

1   44.   (Withdrawn)   A method of operating a postal service computer system, the

2   method including the steps of:

3   A.   associating a given user postal mailing label session with a user identifier;

 4   B.   retaining messages relating to the status of the session at a server and

 5   including in each message a message sequence number and an attribute

 6   that is associated with the user identifier, the messages further including

 7   mailing label information provided through the session; and

 8   C.   using the messages to continue the session from a point at which the

 9   session last communicated with the server by presenting the mailing label

10   information provided through the session, in response to the user

11   identifier being presented at a node that communicates with the server.

 1   45.   (Withdrawn) The method of claim 44 further including a step of maintaining an

 2   index of the messages, the index being sorted by the attribute that is associated with the

 3   user identifier.

 1   46.   (Withdrawn)   The method of claim 45 further including the step of ending the

 2   continued session by printing the mailing label in accordance with the retained

 3   information.

47.   (Withdrawn) The method of claim 46 further including

        A.   in the step of retaining messages retaining messages that include the information relating to postage;

        B.   in the step of continuing the session presenting the retained information relating to the postage; and

        C.   in the step of ending the session printing the postage in accordance with the retained information.